

Message Text

SECRET

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CF, XA, XJ
SUBJECT: S. AFRICA POLICY: SHABA, SOVIET/CUBAN INVOLVEMENT

REF: STATE 153145

1. I GREATLY APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON IMPORTANT TELEGRAPHIC CONVERSATION BETWEEN USUN AND DEPARTMENT. AS RECENT EDITION OF "JEUNE AFRIQUE" ELOQUENTLY AND ACCURATELY POINTED OUT, CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN AFRICA ARE TRULY EPOCH MAKING, AND IT IS PRUDENT FOR USG NOW TO STOP, THINK, AND PLAN ON A BROAD SCALE.

2. AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S SUGGESTION HAS TWO ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS: FIRST, WE OFFER TO AFRICA'S LEADERS A SERIOUS OPPORTUNITY TO TALK WITH THE WORLD'S MAJOR POWER, AND SECOND WE INSIST THAT THE AFRICANS MUST MEANINGFULLY PARTICIPATE, I.E. "WE CHALLENGE" THEM TO FACE UP TO THEIR PROBLEMS.

3. TO BE SUCCESSFUL, IT SEEMS TO ME, THIS APPROACH REQUIRES SEVERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON OUR PART:
A) WE MUST CAREFULLY PREPARE OUR BRIEFING PAPERS AND WE MUST BE PREPARED TO TALK WITH SOME CONCRETENESS.

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B) WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT WHILE AFRICAN LEADERS ARE DEVOTED TO THE CONCEPT OF THE CONTINENT AS AN ENTITY AND TO THE COROLLARY THAT AFRICAN PROBLEMS SHOULD BE DEALT WITH BY AFRICANS, AFRICAN LEADERS ARE ALSO CONCERNED WITH AND MOTIVATED BY OTHER CONCERNS AND IDEALS, RANGING FROM PERSONAL POWER THROUGH SOCIAL REFORM. THESE CONCERNS ARE

REGIONALLY NEUTRAL AND OFTEN RESULT IN AFRICAN LEADERS ADOPTING POLICIES WHICH DIVERGE FROM THE FORMAL COMMITMENT TO THE PAN-AFRICAN IDEAL. WITH REGARD TO THAT IDEAL, LET US NOT BE MORE CATHOLIC THAN THE POPE.

C) PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS AT DIALOGUE WITH AFRICANS HAVE BEEN HINDERED BY THE IMPRESSION WE SOMETIMES CREATE, INADVERTENTLY TO BE SURE, THAT OUR INTEREST IN A PARTICULAR LEADER OR GROUP OF LEADERS AND COUNTRIES RESULTS FROM A SUDDEN NEED OF OURS, AND DOES NOT REFLECT A LONG-TERM INTEREST. MANY PEOPLE FEEL WE IGNORE THEM UNTIL WE NEED THEM, AND THEN DROP THEM IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE PARTICULAR CRISIS IN QUESTION IS OVER. THEREFORE, A NEW APPROACH AT DIALOGUE SHOULD CLEARLY HAVE A LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE. FOR INSTANCE, AN EXPANDED PROGRAM OF VISITS BY AFRICAN CHIEFS OF STATE COULD BE PLANNED -- AND EVEN LEAKED CONCURRENTLY WITH THE INTENSIFICATION OF SHORT-TERM CONTACTS ON PRESENT PROBLEMS. A SUPPORTING PROGRAM OF MINISTERIAL LEVEL INVITATIONS TO THE U.S., TO INCLUDE COUNTRIES NOT OBVIOUSLY CENTRAL TO ANY SPECIFIC CURRENT CRISIS, COULD BE IMPLEMENTED.

D) SPECIFICALLY, WE COULD ENCOURAGE THE OAU AS AN INSTITUTION BY ADOPTING A FORMAL POLICY OF INVITING EACH INCUMBENT PRESIDENT TO VISIT THE U.S. IN HIS
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ROLE AS PRESIDENT OF THAT ORGANIZATION.

4. THE ABOVE SUGGESTIONS ARE MORE TECHNIQUE THAN SUBSTANCE, BUT GOOD POLICY CAN SUFFER FROM BAD TIMING AND POOR MANNERS. AFRICAN LEADERS WILL BY AND LARGE RESPOND TO A CALL FOR SERIOUS CONVERSATION AND COOPERATION, BUT THEY WILL NEED TO BE CONVINCED THAT WE WILL ANSWER THE PHONE WHEN THEY CALL.
MARKS

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